

**Southwest Resource Advisory Council**  
**MEETING MINUTES**  
**Friday, July 23, 2004, 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.**  
Hinsdale County Administration Building  
Coursey Annex Meeting Room  
311 North Henson  
Lake City, Colorado

Dave Ubell, the Southwest Resource Advisory Council (SWRAC) chairman, called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. *The attendees today constitute a quorum.*

**ATTENDEES**

Resource Advisory Council Members

Dave Ubell, Category 3	Anthony Gurzick, Category 3
Kathy Welt, Category 1	Howard Heath, Category 1
Don Cardin, Category 1	Nik Kendzierski, Category 2
Mallory Dimmitt, Category 2	Andrea Robinsong, Category 2
John Field, Category 1	Kelly Wilson, Category 3
Art Goodtimes, Category 2	Alan Staehle, Category 3
Andrew Gulliford, Category 2	

BLM Staff

Arden Anderson	Catherine Robertson
Eric Finstick	Barbara Sharrow
Steven Hall	Julie Stotler
Dave Kauffman	Barry Tollefson
Mel Lloyd	Karen Tucker

Visitors	Representing	Town/City
Mark Fonken	Hartman Rocks Core Group Lead	Gunnison
Rosemary Gentry	Self	Lake City
Bill Grant	CCRA	Grand Junction
Pete Kolbensschlag	CEC	Paonia
Sam Sorkin	HCCA	Crested Butte
Derek Wagner	Senator Allard Office	Grand Junction

**Opening Remarks from Dave Ubell/Introductions**

Chairman Dave Ubell announced that he has videotapes available from the National RAC Chair Conference in Phoenix.

Barry Tollefson, Gunnison field office manager, explained the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) staffing structure for the Colorado RACs, as stipulated by the State Director. Barry stated that either he or Barb Sharrow will be the lead Designated Field Officer (DFO) for the SWRAC with a two-year rotation, and Mark Stiles, who is not present today and the current lead DFO, will be stepping down from that role. Barry introduced Mel Lloyd, the new Public Affairs Specialist at the Western Slope Center, who will be working with both the Northwest and SWRACs.

### **Old Business**

Dave Kauffman, associate field manager in the Uncompahgre field office, presented the “Control of Noxious Weeds” Resolution for signature, which was approved during the May meeting.

Andy Gulliford expressed concern with BLM’s lack of follow-up with issues regarding the San Juan Gold land exchange discussed during the last meeting. Andy had been contacted by a San Juan County commissioner inquiring about the status. Andy stated that the RAC can only be effective in answering the public’s concerns if BLM provides the necessary feedback.

The HD Mountains Environmental Assessment (EA) was released by the BLM in June 2004, and public comments mostly center on extending the 90-day comment period, flaws in the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) and demanding no drilling. The oil and gas subcommittee will be meeting on August 4 with open houses on August 11, 17 and 19 and report back on the EA. Nik Kendzierski indicated that the open houses will assist the group in providing input to the RAC.

Kelly Wilson stated that problems are arising in the oil and gas industry from BLM’s slow response to inspections that have been conducted.

Steven Hall, BLM Western Slope Center public affairs officer, reported that Mark Stiles has been contacted. Mark Stiles will provide an update on the project.

Kelly reported on the Canyon of the Ancients Monument planning process. The committee is finished and handed documents over to the planning staff. The Advisory Committee meets in September, and public scoping will then move forward. Kelly expressed concerns with the grazing program’s use of native species and efforts to establish sensitive native plants.

Andy stated that Fort Lewis College is still trying to establish what the permit system is for archaeological/cultural studies. Dave Kauffman informed Andy that special recreation permit application packets could be obtained from the Dolores field office.

Andy passed a news article around regarding the National Sage-grouse Initiative, which is now receiving national attention. Barry mentioned that State Director Ron Wenker is the BLM lead on the sage-grouse initiative and is traveling frequently for that program. Populations continue to decline given the drought and other factors. BLM is preparing a status report for the Fish & Wildlife Service (FWS) regarding the current status of the Greater sage-grouse. The Greater sage-grouse is not listed but is currently under study.

Andy also requested that old business be discussed first, rather than last, on the agenda. The RAC agreed that old business should be moved up for today as well as future meetings.

Andrea Robinson asked about the RAC announcements for FY 2005 and Steven Hall explained that announcements are due from Washington sometime in August.

Andy asked Tony Gurzick about the wolf hit by a car near Vail recently. Tony reported that it was from Wyoming and had a radio collar attached. Tony explained that I-70 was established as the division line in managing wolf populations, and since the wolf was hit south of I-70, it must be classified as a Mexican Gray wolf, which has different implications from that of the Wyoming wolves.

### **Hartman Rocks Update**

Barry reminded the RAC that about a year ago they sanctioned a community working group to provide input to the BLM in developing the Resource Management Plan (RMP) for the Hartman Rocks Recreation Area. Arden Anderson, BLM recreation and wilderness specialist, updated the group on the past year's accomplishments, as well as what the future would bring for the area. Arden provided a detailed presentation on the draft RMP being developed, which includes four alternatives and will soon be available for public review. Skiff milkvetch, an endangered and rare plant known to exist only in this area, as well as cultural sites dating back 5,000 years, are receiving special attention in this RMP. BLM conducted an informal user survey and received a number of comments (see attachment).

Mark Fonken, Hartman Rocks core working group lead, talked about his positive experiences—the group worked well together and he hates to see the process end. Mark said the public must become more involved in working with the government in guiding public land management. A diverse group of people came together and reached consensus on a number of controversial issues.

Andrea asked about exclosures that would allow ATVs access yet prevent resource damage to rare plants. Arden explained that he felt fencing was not appropriate for this situation since designated routes will be instituted. Only two trails exist that would be impacted, and through education and an improved trail system, exclosures can hopefully be avoided. Karen Tucker, Gunnison Gorge National Conservation Area (NCA) manager, added that fencing in some cases can be detrimental in protecting rare plants, actually drawing attention and possible vandalism to sites and plants.

Arden assured the group that signing and education are part of the RMP, including improved kiosks and brochures.

### **Wilderness/WSA Discussion**

Dave Kauffman introduced Eric Finstick, wilderness lead from the BLM state office. Eric provided history on how BLM has developed its Wilderness/WSA programs in Colorado. The

Wilderness Act of 1964 guided all federal agencies, except BLM, in wilderness initiatives. The Federal Land Policy and Management Act (FLPMA) of 1976 required BLM to implement wilderness plans for its public lands within 15 years. Eric explained the differences between wilderness and WSAs and their authorized uses, as well as what constitutes “suitable” and “unsuitable” for wilderness designation.

Eric handed out information on frequently asked questions about wilderness (see attachment). Congressional grazing guidelines (1980) stipulate that grazing will continue in wilderness. Some level of motorized use may be allowable for managing this grazing use, with the BLM and grazing permittees working closely together. Emergency situations, such as fire and search and rescue, allow vehicle use with restoration efforts initiated afterward. Hunting is also an allowed activity, but bicycles are not.

Andy expressed concerns with oil and gas exploration related to WSAs. Eric stated that leasing is not available within WSAs, although some pre-existing leases were issued prior to WSA designation. The BLM planning processes to review wilderness values to be considered for designation, but new WSAs cannot be created through the process. Eric also reminded the group that the Citizens’ Wilderness Proposal has no legal standing but that the DeGette bill would allow new Wilderness Areas to be created if Congress approved it. The designation of a monument does not impact a WSA’s standing. Congress has the authority to designate NCAs and wilderness, while the President has the authority to designate monuments. WSAs may exist for an undetermined length of time—it is up to Congress to act either to designate the area as wilderness or remove it from consideration. Chainsaws are not allowed in wilderness areas; hand saws are required. Minimum requirements do allow some exceptions, those being invasive plant control and forest blow downs related to imminent fire danger to nearby communities. Andy asked Derek Wagner, attending from Senator Wayne Allard’s office, what the RAC could do to encourage Congress to act on some of these WSAs. Derek explained that Senator Allard believes in a bottom-up approach (citizen initiative) and would consider a direct request from the RAC, or meet with them, regarding designating certain areas. Dave Ubell asked the RAC to consider drafting a letter requesting Congress to act and expressed his desire to invite the other two Colorado RACs to join in signing the letter. Art Goodtimes disagreed and instead supports a grass roots approach involving local interested citizens.

On behalf of Penny Wu, who could not be here today, Eric spoke about WSAs in the BLM/U.S. Forest Service Dolores Public Lands Office jurisdiction (see attachment). Andy asked Kelly if it would be possible to get Montezuma County’s support in moving the designation of these WSAs forward, and Kelly indicated that it would be a possibility but not through their initiative alone.

Arden provided information on wilderness and WSAs within the Gunnison FO jurisdiction, such as Redcloud/Handies Peaks and Powderhorn. A few inholdings have been acquired, but some still exist. Volunteers assist the BLM with trail maintenance, helping to conserve wilderness values.

Karen Tucker presented information on wilderness and WSAs managed by the Uncompahgre FO. Adobe Badlands is a WSA not recommended for wilderness designation, but travel issues are a concern. Camel Back, another WSA not recommended for wilderness, is more

appropriately used as a Livestock Management Area and is seeing increased use from others as the urban interface grows. Tabeguache WSA allows grazing, and disposal, mining and mineral and geothermal withdrawals exist. Tamarisk is an issue here, and the invasive plant is scheduled to be treated in 2006. Dominguez WSA is popular for floating the Gunnison River. Karen also discussed issues in the Dolores and Gunnison Gorge wilderness areas. Volunteers have assisted in repairing the Chukar Trail, which receives heavy use.

### **Public Comment Period**

Dave Ubell opened the public comment period at 1:30 p.m.

Pete Kolbenschlager, Western Slope field director of the Colorado Environmental Coalition (CEC), took the floor and expressed his concerns with BLM's management of three areas—Bang's Canyon, South Shale Ridge and Vermillion Basin (Note: all are within the jurisdiction of the Northwest RAC). Pete reminded the group that it is up to Congress to decide what is protected, and he is concerned that BLM's recently released South Shale Ridge EA could potentially make the area available for lease. Pete is disappointed with what he believes to be BLM's inability to protect special areas. Pete feels that the 30-day comment period is inadequate and that BLM is not listening to its public.

Eric explained that BLM ultimately performed additional evaluations and public comment review, and the above three areas were found to have wilderness characteristics. Eric reminded the group that BLM must ensure that any proposed action be supported by an adequate National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) process.

Rosemary Knight Gentry, a Lake City resident for 23 years, explained that she is an avid backpacker and values wilderness values. Rosemary commended the BLM in their management of the Handies/Redcloud WSAs. Rosemary added that she would like to see these areas become wilderness and handed out a letter (see attached) from Mary Carlin, another Lake City resident who could not be present but wanted to commend BLM's WSA management practices. Rosemary also expressed disappointment when Hinsdale County residents turned down an informal vote to add additional wilderness to the county.

Andrea asked the Chair if this RAC could ask the BLM to extend the EA comment period mentioned by Pete, and the SWRAC agreed that it was inappropriate to become involved in a decision that lies within the NWRAC jurisdiction.

Alan Staehle advised Pete that a non-confrontational approach would be more beneficial than one of contention. He does not think that BLM is intentionally trying to avoid public comment by holding a 30-day comment period as opposed to a longer period.

Ray Blaum, Hinsdale County Administrator, informed the group that three public hearings regarding wilderness issues in Hinsdale County ultimately proved that many citizens did not misunderstand wilderness issues. Hinsdale County simply does not want any more wilderness areas given the restrictions that come with them, he said.

Bill Grant, attending on behalf of the Concerned Citizens Resource Association (CCRA), added that if wilderness areas are being overrun, then the answer is to create more wilderness.

### **Dominguez-Escalante Community Stewardship Plan—BLM Grand Junction and Montrose Field Offices**

Barb introduced Catherine Robertson, Grand Junction field manager. Catherine approached the Uncompahgre FO about working together on the Dominguez-Escalante Community Stewardship initiative, which would also involve both the Northwest and Southwest RACs, and explained her reason for being here today. Hand-outs were distributed, including a draft resolution that would be sent to the Department of the Interior Secretary Gale Norton (see attached).

Catherine Robertson presented a brief background on the proposed planning area. The entire canyon complex has been recommended by BLM to Congress as suitable for wilderness designation, which includes red rock canyons, cultural values and great recreational opportunities. Not only the area recommended for wilderness, but the outer areas justify the “community stewardship” name and all are receiving increased use. Access includes the Bridgeport Bridge condemned by the BLM several years ago because it was unsafe. The GJFO now has funding to replace the bridge and is proposing several alternatives to the public for providing legal, safe public access. The NWRAC will be approached at their August meeting to join in and support the initiative as well.

Andy requested a map reflecting the boundaries of the SWRAC’s jurisdiction in relation to this planning area and added that ranching heritage, national historic register designations and canoeing opportunities are important aspects of this area. Historical and archaeological audits must be done now, as should involve the Ute tribes.

Kelly expressed concerned with this proposed project taking away funding from other important projects in Colorado. Catherine assured him that this letter is only encouraging the Secretary to give this some thought, not necessarily asking for funding to be obligated yet.

Andy asked about the train crossing at Bridgeport and Catherine stated that signage and fencing, approved by the railroad, will safely guide users around the railroad tracks.

Catherine informed the group that the Uncompahgre dam project could still happen but feels it is not likely.

Pete commended Catherine, Barb and the BLM in leading the way on this initiative.

Eric assured Kelly that Washington would not take money away from existing projects, such as the monument, but this initiative might in turn mean more funds would be allocated to the State of Colorado as a whole.

Tony encouraged the BLM to work closely with CDOW in going forward, and Catherine explained her FO’s past and continuing efforts in working closely with the Department of Natural Resources.

Alan made a motion to support this initiative, emphasizing the preservation of American historic cultures, and the RAC should authorize the chair to sign the resolution letter. Andy seconded the motion, and a vote was called and passed unanimously.

Some RAC members are also members of Club 20, and they will address this initiative as well. Dave Ubell will call Ann McCoy Harold, a RAC member not present today, to talk about this Resolution.

Howard addressed an issue regarding Kelly's earlier statement regarding irresponsible OHV users. Howard recognizes that there is a problem and it must be solved. However, OHV volunteers dedicate many hours in areas such as Grand Mesa and feels that licensing ATVs and approaching representatives may help in solving some issues. Art agreed with Howard that the RAC should get involved and may be in the position to step up and lead the way in working together to resolve these issues.

Barry announced that Mark Stiles had called and reported that the San Juan County land exchange process is ongoing and clearances are taking place on subject parcels, including the Eureka town site. A feasibility report is due out by summer's end, but anyone may contact Mark if they require further detail. Andy requested a copy of this report, and Barry said he would pass that on. Barry also informed the RAC that SWRAC DFOs will request that Ron Wenker designate Barb Sharrow as the lead DFO for a two-year period.

Barry reminded the RAC that some appointments are ending in August and thanked both Don Cardin and Dave Ubell, who chose not to apply for another term, for their service to the RAC.

John Field added that he has nothing to report on the grazing school; he is waiting to hear back.

### **Next Meetings and Potential Topics**

The next meeting is scheduled for October 1, 2004 in Norwood and Dave Kauffman will provide information on lodging and meeting accommodations.

Agenda items could include:

- RAC training
- New RAC member orientation
- Briefing on BLM OHV regulations
- Strategy and mechanism for resolving OHV issues
- Dominguez-Escalante Community Stewardship Plan subcommittee
- San Juan Gold land exchange

The meeting was adjourned at 4:30 p.m.

## **Southwest Resource Advisory Council Meeting**

Friday, July 23

Hinsdale County Administration Building–Coursey Annex Meeting Room,  
311 North Henson, Lake City, Colorado

# **AGENDA**



- |            |  |
|------------|--|
| 9:00 a.m.  | Opening Remarks and Introductions  |
| 9:15 a.m.  | Designated Federal Official and RAC Chair time   |
| 9:30 a.m.  | Hartman Rocks Update   |
| 10:00 a.m. | Wilderness and WSA discussion  |
|            |  |
| Noon       | Lunch  |
|            |  |
| 1:00 p.m.  | Wilderness/WSA (continued)   |
| 1:30 p.m.  | Public Comment Period  |
| 2:30 p.m.  | Dominguez-Escalante Community Stewardship Plan - Grand Junction & Montrose BLM offices |
| 3:30 p.m.  | Old Business   |
| 4:00 p.m.  | Next Meeting and   |
|            |  |
| 4:30 p.m.  | Adjourn  |



## Results of Hartman Rocks Trail Survey – November 2003

Number of Surveys Received – 53 as of 11/13/03 (34 came from CMBA members) 19 from Gunnison. Later we received another 15 Motorcycle comments from Gunnison.

Age Range of Respondents:	Mountain Bikers	Motorcyclists (Avg. 27)
Less than 20 years old	0	4
21 to 30 y/o	9	9
31 to 40 y/o	20	0
41 to 50 y/o	19	3
51 to 60 y/o	3	0
61+	2	0
??	1	

Activities practiced at Hartman's and skill level -some respondents practiced more than one activity:

Skill level ►	Unknown	Beginner	Intermediate	Expert	Total
Activity ▼					
Mt Biking	15	1	11	25	52
Motorcycle	3	3	6	4	16
Hiking	10		1	1	12
X-C Skiing	5			1	6
Horseback	1				1
Trail Run	7	2	3	4	16
Rock Climb			2		2

How do You Rate the Hardest Trail at Hartmans compared with the hardest trail you've ridden elsewhere on a scale of 1 to 10?

Mt Bike – 40 responses – Range 3 to 10, responses indicating:

3 = 1, 4 = 3, 5 = 6, 6 = 5, 7 = 10, 8 = 9, 9 = 2, 10 = 4      average = 6.88

Motorcycle – 16 responses – Range 3 to 10      average = 7.4

Horseback – 1 respondent- average = 3

Hiking – 17 respondents – Range 1 to 7      responses indicating 1=2, 2=4, 3=5, 4=0, 5=3, 6=2, 7=1  
Average = 3.47

What is appropriate mix of skill levels on trails?

(shown as percentage of Beginner, Intermediate, Expert and the number that voted for that mix)

For Mountain Biking

25-50-25 = 9	33-34-33 = 5	20-40-40 = 5	40-40-20 = 4	20-60-20 = 4
40-50-10 = 2	30-50-20 = 2	20-45-35 = 2	20-50-30 = 2	30-40-30 = 2
25-25-50 = 1	10-60-30 = 1	30-30-40 = 1	40-55-5 = 1	30-60-10 = 1
10-70-20 = 1	30-35-35 = 1	0-80-20 = 1	50-25-25 = 1	60-25-15 = 1
25-40-35 = 1	30-45-25 = 1			

For Motorcycle Use	33-34-33 = 2	25-50-25 = 2	5-45-50 = 2	10-50-40 = 2	40-50-10 = 2
20-60-20 = 1	25-75-0 = 1	20-40-40 = 1	5-35-60 = 1	0-50-50 = 1	5-20-75 = 1
50-25-25 = 1	30-50-20 = 1	20-50-30 = 1	5-25-70 = 1		

Table of Results for Trail Survey on Difficulty, Popularity and Quality of Trails at Hartman's  
Scale of 1 to 5 with 1 being least and 5 being most

Characteristic ►	Difficulty/ Rank	Popularity/Rank	Quality/Rank	# of Responses
Trail Number ▼				
3 - V Drop	4.27 / 1	2.75 / 19	2.84 / 20	33
4 -	2.72 / 9	3.41 / 15	3.45 / 18	11
5 – Ridge Trail	3.65 / 3	2.73 / 20	3.23 / 19	26
6 – Golf Course	2.06 / 16	2.89 / 18	3.74 / 16	19
7 – Becks	2.66 / 11	4.25 / 4	4.27 / 11	33
8 – Rattlesnake	3.95 / 2	4.20 / 6	4.39 / 7	37
9 – Rocky Ridge	3.44 / 4	4.20 / 6	3.74 / 16	36
10 – Behind Rocks	2.48 / 12	3.91 / 9	3.96 / 14	24
11 –	2.33 / 14	4.30 / 3	4.36 / 8	11
12 – Lower Luge	2.47 / 13	3.47 / 13	3.92 / 15	36
13 – Middle Luge	1.81 / 19	4.43 / 1	4.56 / 3	36
14 – Sea of Sage	1.65 / 20	4.37 / 2	4.50 / 4	36
15 - Broken Shovel	1.82 / 18	4.21 / 5	4.28 / 10	33
16 – Skyline	2.48 / 12	3.90 / 10	4.31 / 9	32
17 – Josho's	3.00 / 7	3.94 / 8	4.47 / 5	33
18 – McCabe's	1.85 / 17	3.04 / 17	3.48 / 17	27
19 – Dave Mo's	3.16 / 6	3.42 / 14	4.03 / 13	32
20 – Ench. Forest	2.86 / 8	3.27 / 16	4.12 / 12	34
21 – Outback	3.25 / 5	3.89 / 11	4.62 / 1	36
22 – Wienzy's	2.32 / 15	3.75 / 12	4.45 / 6	33
23 – Bambie's	2.67 / 10	4.08 / 7	4.59 / 2	39

Trail Ratings from Motorcyclists

Characteristic ►	Difficulty/ Rank	Popularity/Rank	Quality/Rank	# of Responses
Trail Number ▼				
3 - V Drop	3.71 / 1	2.00 / 15	3.71 / 8	7
4 -	2.00 / 17	16	3.00 / 15	2
5 – Ridge Trail	3.50 / 2	3.25 / 12	2.89 / 16	10
6 – Golf Course	1.86 / 18	2.00 / 15	2.60 / 17	7
7 – Becks	3.13 / 5	4.00 / 1	3.43 / 11	8
8 – Rattlesnake	3.17 / 4	4.00 / 1	4.25 / 2	12
9 – Rocky Ridge	3.30 / 3	3.78 / 4	4.00 / 5	10
10 – Behind Rocks	2.44 / 13	2.37 / 10	3.13 / 14	9
11 –	1.67 / 20	3.00 / 14	2.50 / 18	3
12 – Lower Luge	2.90 / 7	3.57 / 7	4.47 / 1	16
13 – Middle Luge	2.47 / 11	3.79 / 3	4.13 / 4	15
14 – Sea of Sage	2.20 / 15	3.00 / 14	3.00 / 15	10
15 - Broken Shovel	2.50 / 10	3.62 / 5	4.15 / 3	14
16 – Skyline	2.78 / 8	3.25 / 12	3.89 / 6	9
17 – Josho's	2.63 / 9	3.09 / 13	3.75 / 7	13
18 – McCabe's	2.27 / 14	3.58 / 6	3.25 / 13	13
19 – Dave Mo's	2.50 / 10	3.38 / 9	3.36 / 12	14
20 – Ench. Forest	3.00 / 6	3.55 / 8	3.25 / 13	11
21 – Outback	2.17 / 16	3.27 / 11	3.50 / 10	12
22 – Wienzy's	1.80 / 19	3.00 / 14	3.60 / 9	10
23 – Bambie's	2.45 / 12	3.80 / 2	3.36 / 12	11

### Trail ratings from Hikers/Runners

Characteristic ►	Difficulty/ Rank	Popularity/ Rank	Quality/ Rank	# of Responses
Trail Number ▼				
3 - V Drop	4	2	4	6
4 -	2	4.33	5	3
5 – Ridge Trail	3.20	2	3.60	5
6 – Golf Course	2	2.5	3.6	4
7 – Becks	2.67	4.33	4.50	6
8 – Rattlesnake	3.33	4.17	4.67	6
9 – Rocky Ridge	3.50	4.17	4.67	6
10 – Behind Rocks	2.20	3.80	4.80	5
11 –	1.67	4.00	5	6
12 – Lower Luge	3	3.17	4.33	6
13 – Middle Luge	1.83	3.67	5	6
14 – Sea of Sage	1.83	4	5	6
15 - Broken Shovel	1.80	3.20	4	5
16 – Skyline	2.50	3.33	4.50	6
17 – Josho’s	3.67	3.67	4.67	6
18 – McCabe’s	1.60	3.40	2.80	5
19 – Dave Mo’s	1.83	2.83	4.33	6
20 – Ench. Forest	2.60	2.40	4	5
21 – Outback	2.20	2.80	4	5
22 – Wienzy’s	2	2.80	4.20	5
23 – Bambie’s	2.50	4.14	4.12	8

### Trail Ratings for Horseback Riders

Characteristic ►	Difficulty/ Rank	Popularity/Rank	Quality/Rank	# of Responses
Trail Number ▼				
3 - V Drop	3			1
4 -				
5 – Ridge Trail				
6 – Golf Course	2	1	1	1
7 – Becks	2	4	3	1
8 – Rattlesnake				
9 – Rocky Ridge	2	1		1
10 – Behind Rocks				
11 –				
12 – Lower Luge	2	2	2	1
13 – Middle Luge	1	2	2	1
14 – Sea of Sage	1	3	3	1
15 - Broken Shovel	1	4	3	1
16 – Skyline	2	4	4	1
17 – Josho’s				
18 – McCabe’s	1	5	4	1
19 – Dave Mo’s	1	5	4	1
20 – Ench. Forest	2	5	4	1
21 – Outback	2	5	4	1
22 – Wienzy’s	1	5	5	1
23 – Bambie’s	1	5	4	1

## Comments on what makes a good ride

### For Mountain Bikers:

- no motorcycles on trails – they widen single track
- open trails, non-motorized use
- good friends, tunes & rhythm, well maintained trails, no litter, no ruts from motorcycles or 4 x 4s
- smooth with some rideable challenges, non-motorized, no loud, aggressive motorcyclists
- single track, well kept, challenging trails, nice scenery, no litter or deep ruts from motorcycles
- trails with some technical challenges but not so much that he has to look at the ground all the time
- trails that are rideable by a skilled rider, a variety of terrain, good access
- nice scenery, challenging trails, riding with friends and dog
- challenging but not suicidal trails, smooth trails with turns
- not too many people, good trail conditions
- challenging single track, quiet
- no motors, buff trails
- single track that's narrow – not blown out and straightened by motorcycles
- nice scenery, variety of terrain, good difficulty, doesn't like overly maintained trails
- nice scenery, rolling single track interspersed with technical sections, not too crowded or rugged
- not having to ride through horse droppings
- good flow, technical and cruising sections, climbing and descending
- connect single track trails into larger loops without using roads
- solitude, no litter, friendly other users, good maintenance, highly technical trails
- lots of maintained trails, trying new trails
- smooth mellow trails
- well maintained trails, no litter or vandalism, courteous & considerate users, good signage
- good mix of technical and fast trails
- moderately difficult, good traction, few people, nice scenery
- single track, mix of slickrock & challenges, no motorized use on bike trails, too loud, tear up trails
- prefers trails that aren't technical, prefers no motorcycles – they come up too fast, loud, damage tr.
- Nice scenery, quiet, no motorcycles
- Rolling, fast trails
- Fast, smooth single track combined with technically challenging sections, good dirt
- No cows, no motorcycles, no horses
- Rideable trails for his skill level, clean, no motorcycles
- Within his riding ability (intermediate), good scenery, not overcrowded, respectful trail users
- Nice scenery, good trail conditions, respectful trail users
- Clearly marked trails in good shape – not rutted by motorcycles or erosion, not so difficult you have to walk a lot of sections

- Amazing single track, well marked trails, friendly people
- Trails at Hartmans are world class
- Nice scenery, singletrack, rolling fast trails combined with technical sections
- Dog friendly, rideable bike trails, not getting run over by motorized use
- Good day, trails that aren't too rocky
- Nice scenery, fun technical combined with high quality single track, not many people
- Not a lot of people, no motorcycles
- Challenging, not crowded
- Lots of single track, low dust, low traffic,
- Network of trails for a varied experience, a choice of a combination of trails, no litter or abused trails
- Diverse trail system, varied length and difficulty, well maintained, develop new trails periodically
- Wide range of trails – easy to hard
- Smooth trails, not rutted, challenging terrain, without huge steps or drops, no loose gravel, tacky trails, shared use if folks respect each other, no trash, whoops from motorcycles are bad, design trails to slow down users after a cruising section without quick corners

#### For Motorcyclists:

- Expert – difficulty of terrain and variation, as little road riding as possible
- Expert – lots and lots of miles, consistent loops
- Expert – high level of difficulty, little road riding, some high speed sections
- Intermed – Technical, difficult trails
- Inter – a good variety of trails, rocky, smooth, fast, slow
- Inter – winding trail with banked turns
- ? – challenging trails with high difficulty and variety of technicality
- Begin – fast, winding sections, short quick loops you can ride after work
- Expert – tough technical trails with up & down hills, lots of interconnecting trails so you can make big loops, lots of turns with varying terrain conditions.
- Inter – technical trails, rocky tight trails with lots of obstacles, rocky, rough, slow trails rather than smooth fast ones, big loops with lots of connecting trails
- ? – everything from easy to most difficult, rocky and difficult is more fun
- ? – technical, difficult trails
- Begin – likes Hartmans because of variety, can start out easy then get harder and improve his skills
- Begin – a good selection of trails, easy to hard, varying terrain
- Inter – big loops to get lots of miles, technical trails with a few fast sections.

## Wilderness Website FAQ's

### **1. What is wilderness?**

Wilderness is defined by the Wilderness Act of 1964 as “. . . an area where the earth and its community of life are untrammeled by man, where man himself is a visitor who does not remain...Federal land retaining its primeval character and influence, without permanent improvements or human habitation, which is protected and managed so as to preserve its natural conditions and which (1) generally appears to have been affected primarily by the forces of nature, with the imprint of man's work substantially unnoticeable; (2) has outstanding opportunities for solitude or a primitive and unconfined type of recreation; (3) has at least five thousand acres of land or is of sufficient size as to make practicable its preservation and use in an unimpaired condition; and (4) may also contain ecological, geological, or other features of scientific, educational, scenic, or historical value.”

### **2. Why are wilderness areas designated?**

The Wilderness Act states that wilderness areas are established, “. . . in order to assure that an increasing population, accompanied by expanding settlement and growing mechanization, does not occupy and modify all areas within the United States and its possessions, leaving no lands designated for preservation and protection in their natural condition. . . .”

### **3. How is wilderness designated?**

Only Congress can designate a wilderness area.

### **4. How much wilderness has been designated by Congress?**

Since Congress passed the Wilderness Act in 1964, over 100 individual acts have been passed designating over 600 wilderness areas. As of 2004 about 106 million acres have been designated wilderness in all but six states. Of this total, 58 million acres are in Alaska and about 48 million in the contiguous 48 states and Hawaii. This is about 2.5% of the land in the lower 48 states. To place this acreage in context, according to the Department of Agriculture's National Resources Inventory, there are approximately 110 million acres of intensively developed land, -- or nearly 6% of the land, -- within the 48 states. And this development is increasing by over 2 million acres per year.

### **5. Which agencies are responsible for management of wilderness areas?**

Wilderness areas are managed by four Federal agencies: the Bureau of Land Management, the Fish and Wildlife Service, the Forest Service, and the National Park Service.

### **6. How much wilderness is managed by the Bureau of Land Management?**

The BLM manages over 6.5 million acres in 161 wilderness areas located in all the western states except Wyoming, Hawaii, and Alaska.

## **7. What Multiple-Uses occur in Bureau of Land Management wilderness?**

The multiple uses of wilderness include protection of air and watersheds; maintenance of soil and water quality, ecological stability, plant and animal gene pools, archaeological and historical sites, and habitat for wildlife; and, continued livestock grazing in areas where grazing was established prior to wilderness designation. Wilderness provides opportunities for outdoor recreation including: hunting, fishing, hiking, horseback riding, and camping. Wilderness also provides for the exercise of prior valid existing rights such as water rights, mining claims, mineral leases, and rights-of-way.

## **8. Does BLM wilderness management differ from management by other agencies?**

Although the Fish and Wildlife Service, Forest Service, and National Park Service have their own specific laws and policies for resource management, they all respond to the same Congressional direction and intent within the Wilderness Act. Policy guidance may be somewhat different from one agency to the next, but overall management is essentially the same. National Park Service wilderness areas usually do not allow grazing or hunting, but this is because National Parks normally do not allow these activities, not because of wilderness designation.

## **9. What is the legal authority for wilderness management?**

In general, wilderness management is established by the Wilderness Act of 1964. Additional wilderness management guidance can be included in the specific legislation that designates a specific wilderness area.

## **10. Are motor vehicles allowed?**

Generally, the Wilderness Act prohibits the use of motor vehicles in wilderness. The law does make special provisions for motor vehicle use: when required in emergencies involving the health and safety of persons; to control fire, insects, and diseases, as necessary to meet minimum requirements for the administration of the area. Motor vehicles may also be allowed where adequate access to inholdings, existing grazing uses, or valid existing rights requires motorized access. These provisions are elaborated upon in the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR).

## **11. What recreation activities occur in wilderness?**

Wilderness areas support non-motorized, non-mechanized recreation that is consistent with protection of wilderness characteristics. Recreational uses in wilderness include activities such as hunting, fishing, hiking, horseback riding, backpacking, camping, nature study, photography, and rock climbing.

## **12. Are bicycles allowed?**

Bicycles are not allowed in wilderness areas. Bicycles are a form of mechanical transport, and as such are prohibited by the Wilderness Act.

**13. Is hunting permitted?**

Yes. Hunting and fishing are allowed in BLM-managed wilderness areas, subject to applicable State and Federal laws. Hunting and fishing activities must be properly licensed, as required by state laws.

**14. Are outfitters allowed to operate in wilderness?**

Yes. Outfitters may be permitted to operate in BLM wilderness areas.

**15. Are wheelchairs allowed?**

Yes. Wheelchairs are permitted in wilderness areas. The term wheelchair means a device designed solely for use by a mobility-impaired person for locomotion that is suitable for use in an indoor pedestrian area.

**16. Is grazing permitted?**

Yes. Grazing is permitted in areas where permits existed prior to the area being designated as wilderness. According to the Congressional Grazing Guidelines in House Report 96-1126, “[t]here shall be no curtailment of grazing in wilderness areas simply because an area is, or has been designated as wilderness, nor should wilderness designation be used . . . to slowly ‘phase out’ grazing. It is anticipated that the numbers of livestock permitted to graze in wilderness would remain at the approximate levels existing at the time an area enters the wilderness system.”

**17. Can range developments be maintained?**

Yes. The maintenance of range developments (including fences, water wells and lines, stock tanks), is permissible in wilderness. Although maintenance is usually completed with non-motorized means, where practical alternatives do not exist, maintenance may be completed with the occasional use of motorized equipment.

**18. Can new range management projects be developed?**

Yes. The construction of new range developments is permissible if the development is consistent with the management plan and the new improvements project is primarily for the purpose of resource protection and the more effective management of these resources rather than to accommodate increased numbers of livestock.

**19. Can ranchers use motor vehicles to take hay, salt, and other feed to their livestock, or to maintain existing developments such as stock ponds, tanks, or fences?**



The Congressional Grazing Guidelines direct that the use of motorized equipment be based on a rule of practical necessity and reasonableness. Where practical alternatives do not exist, maintenance or other activities may be accomplished through the occasional use of motorized equipment. Motorized equipment need not be allowed for activities that can reasonably and practically be accomplished on horseback or foot. Use of motorized equipment is normally only permitted to those portions of a wilderness area where they had occurred prior to the area's designation as wilderness and where motorized equipment would not have a significant adverse effect on the natural environment.

**20. How does wilderness designation impact opportunities for hard rock mining or mineral leasing?**

Subject to valid rights, the minerals in wilderness are withdrawn from all forms of appropriation under the mining laws and from disposition under mineral leasing laws. Prior existing claims or leases may be valid existing rights under appropriate circumstances.

**21. Is mineral exploration allowed?**

The Wilderness Act allows prospecting for the purpose of gathering information about mineral or other resources, if such activity is compatible with the preservation of the wilderness.

**22. How does wilderness designation impact future proposals for roads?**

The Wilderness Act prohibits construction of new roads, subject to valid existing rights.

**23. Can landowners build roads to access their property if the property is located within a wilderness area?**

Landowners have the right to have access to their property. The BLM may approve the kind and degree of access that the landowner enjoyed immediately before the wilderness was designated and that will cause the least impact on wilderness character.

**24. Can the BLM acquire privately-owned lands within a wilderness?**

The BLM can acquire privately-owned lands within a wilderness through an exchange or purchase if the owner concurs in such acquisition or the acquisition is specifically authorized by Congress.

**25. How does the BLM manage fires in wilderness?**

The BLM manages fires in wilderness similar to fire management outside wilderness. In many cases, fire is a natural part of the wilderness character of an area. In these situations, the BLM is working to restore fire to its natural role. Natural and prescribed fires may be allowed to burn when the fire is in conformity with an approved fire management plan. In all cases, the equipment and tactics used to manage fires is designed to minimize the impact to wilderness

values. When fire threatens human life or property, motorized equipment or other tools are used as necessary to eliminate or minimize the threat.

**26. Is rescue equipment allowed ?**

Yes. Rescue equipment, including motor vehicles, is allowed when required in emergencies involving the health and safety of persons within the area.

**27. How are water rights impacted?**

Wilderness designation does not impact existing water rights. Some wilderness areas have a reserved water right and some wilderness areas do not. Legislation designating wilderness areas has had variations in language on this topic. When a wilderness is designated with Federal water rights, the effective date of the right is normally the date of wilderness designation. When a wilderness area has a Federal water right, it does not affect any other existing water rights and uses occurring on the date of wilderness designation.

**28. How does wilderness designation affect air quality status?**

The Clean Air Act Amendments of 1977 designated wilderness areas existing at that time to be Class I Areas. Areas designated wilderness after 1977 are classified as Class II, unless they are additions to existing Class I areas. The Clean Air Act also allows the states to designate wilderness areas as Class I using normal state processes. The majority of BLM wilderness areas are Class II, which allows some degradation associated with moderate industrial and population growth.

**29. How are specific management provisions developed for a particular wilderness area?**

Wilderness management plans are developed for each BLM-administered wilderness area. Each plan is tailored to the environmental setting, history of use, and other factors affecting each individual area. The plans are developed with input from state and local agencies, and the local community. Once developed, plans are submitted for additional public review and undergo intense scrutiny prior to approval.

**Briefing Paper  
Wilderness Study Areas  
Dolores Public Lands Office  
July 2004**

The San Juan / San Miguel Resource Management Plan (1985) recommends that 28,539 acres of the Dolores River Canyon WSA be recommended *suitable* for wilderness designation. The remaining six WSA's (Cahone Canyon, Cross Canyon, McKenna Peak, Menefee Mountain, Squaw/Papoose Canyon, and Weber Mountain) are recommended as *nonsuitable* for wilderness designation. However, pending Congressional action, all WSA's will be managed under BLM's Interim Management Policy.

<b>Wilderness Study Area</b>	<b>BLM Wilderness Inventory Number</b>	<b>Public Land Acreage</b>	<b>County</b>	<b>Location of WSA</b>
Cahone Canyon	CO-030-265D	8,960	Montezuma/Dolores	9 miles south of Dove Creek
Cross Canyon	CO-030-265 UT-060-229	11,580 (CO) 1,008 (UT)	Montezuma/Dolores San Juan (UT)	15 miles southwest of Dove Creek
Dolores River Canyon	CO-030-290	28,668	Montrose/San Miguel	18 miles west of Naturita
McKenna Peak	CO-030-286	19,398	San Miguel/Dolores	20 miles south of Naturita
Menefee Mountain	CO-030-251	7,129	Montezuma	4 miles south of Mancos
Squaw/Papoose Canyon	CO-030-265A UT-060-227	4,611 (CO) 6,676 (UT)	Dolores San Juan (UT)	10 miles southwest of Dove Creek
Weber Mountain	CO-030-252	6,303	Montezuma	4 miles south of Mancos
<b>Total Acreage</b> (does not include acreage in Utah)		<b>86,649</b>		

The following provides a summary of the topography, natural values, recreation opportunities, and other associated resource values for each WSA:

**Cahone Canyon WSA**

- Is within the Canyons of the Ancients National Monument
- Confluence of Dove Creek, Cross and Cahone Canyons
- Pinon/Juniper forest with rocky outcrops
- Cottonwood and riparian canyon bottoms
- Wildlife habitat includes: elk, deer, mountain lion, black bear, bobcat, red fox, golden eagles, red-tailed hawks
- Several archeological sites
- Hunting, hiking, and viewing archeological sites are the primary recreational activities (no maintained trails)
- Two livestock grazing allotments

- Actively monitored in cooperation with volunteers from the San Juan Mountain Association
- National Public Lands Day Project scheduled for September 2004 (project will rehabilitate a spring that has been heavily impacted by livestock and big game wildlife).

### **Cross Canyon WSA**

- Is within the Canyons of the Ancients National Monument
- Confluence of three canyons (Cross, Ruin, and Cow)
- Pinon/Juniper forest with cottonwood and riparian canyon bottoms
- Wildlife habitat includes: elk, deer, mountain lion, black bear, bobcat, golden eagles, and Cooper's hawks
- Several archeological sites
- Hunting, hiking, horseback riding, and viewing archeological sites are the primary recreational activities (developed trail along southern end of Cross Canyon)
- Entire area is one livestock grazing allotment
- Actively monitored in cooperation with volunteers from the San Juan Mountain Association
- Restoration of a user-made motorized two-track in October 2003 with volunteers from the Colorado Environmental Coalition.

### **Dolores River Canyon WSA**

- Recommended for designation as a Wild and Scenic River in 1976
- Dolores River Corridor Management Plan completed in 1990
- Portions of five grazing allotments
- Spectacular unique and scenic desert river canyons
- Massive sheer canyon walls, exposing 160 million years of scenic geological grandeur
- Ecologically diverse side canyons (Bull, Leach, Coyote Wash, Spring, La Sal, and Wild Steer)
- Outstanding opportunities for solitude
- Pinon/Juniper forests and sagebrush covered 'benches,' with lush riparian vegetation along the main channel and side canyons
- Wildlife habitat includes: elk, deer, mountain lion, black bear, desert big horn sheep, river otter, peregrine falcon, bobcat, golden and bald eagles, red-tailed hawks, and blue heron.
- Archeological and paleontological sites
- Monitoring accomplished via seasonal staff and permanent workforce
- Recreational opportunities include: whitewater boating (dependent on annual water releases from McPhee Reservoir), dispersed campsites, some side canyon trails, camping, hiking, hunting, horseback riding, and fishing.

### **McKenna Peak WSA**

- Portions overlap with the Spring Creek Wild Horse Herd Management Area
- Six grazing allotments
- Cone-shaped 8,000 ft. peak with massive buttress-like cliffs, rugged topography
- Some pinon/juniper forests but mostly grey-black colored badlands support little vegetation

- Wildlife habitat includes: elk, deer, mountain lion, black bear, pronghorn antelope, bobcat, golden and bald eagles, red-tailed hawks, kestrel
- Hunting, horseback riding, and viewing wild horses are the primary recreational activities
- Actively monitored in cooperation with volunteers from the San Juan Mountain Association
- Annual maintenance projects with students from Missouri State University (fence maintenance, sign installation/maintenance, trash removal).

#### **Menefee Mountain & Weber Mountain WSA's**

- Both WSA's are isolated island mesas surrounded by either private land, Mesa Verde National Park, or the Ute Mountain Reservation
- Pinon/juniper forests and rocky cliffs
- Two grazing allotments (Menefee) and four allotments (in Weber)
- Wildlife habitat includes: elk, deer, mountain lion, black bear, bobcat, and golden eagles
- Monitoring accomplished via seasonal staff and permanent workforce
- Limited hunting and hiking due to difficulty with public access.

#### **Squaw/Papoose Canyon WSA**

- Is within the Canyons of the Ancients National Monument
- Portions of three grazing allotments
- Confluence of Squaw and Papoose Canyons
- Pinon/juniper forests with rocky canyons and arroyos
- Cottonwood and riparian canyon bottoms
- Wildlife habitat includes: elk, deer, mountain lion, black bear, red-tailed and Cooper's hawks, and golden eagles
- Archeological sites
- Monitoring accomplished via seasonal staff and permanent workforce
- Hunting, hiking, and viewing archeological sites are the primary recreational activities (no maintained trails)

Mary Carkin  
111 N. Silver Street  
Lake City, CO 81235

July 23, 2004

To Whom It May Concern:

As a year-round resident of Lake City, I would like to express my deepest support for the ongoing management and treatment of the Handies and Redcloud Wilderness Study Areas *as wilderness*.

To paraphrase Wendell Berry, we need to preserve some places as wilderness if only to gauge the success of ourselves and our civilization elsewhere-- and of course, to engage in the "kindly use" of the rest of the earth.

Thank you for hearing me.

Sincerely,

Mary Carkin



# BLM Resource Advisory Councils

Partners Across The West

July 20, 2004

The Honorable Gale Norton  
Secretary of the Interior  
18<sup>th</sup> and C Streets, N.W.  
Washington, DC 20202

Dear Secretary Norton,

## RAC Members

### Northwest RAC

Geoff Blakeslee, Chairman  
David Bailey  
David Cesark  
Jeff Comstock  
Kenneth Currey  
T. Wright Dickinson  
Wade Haerle  
Kathy Hall  
Jon Hill  
Patrick Kennedy  
Charles Kerr  
John Martin  
Larry McCown  
Forrest Nelson  
Charles Yates

### Southwest RAC

David Ubell, Chairman  
Lon Abadie  
Don Cardin  
Mallory Dimmitt  
John Field  
Tony Gurzick  
Ann McCoy Harold  
Howard Heath  
Art Goodtimes  
Andy Gulliford  
Nik Kendzioriski  
Andrea Robinsong  
Alan Staehle  
Kathy Welt  
Kelly Wilson

The Dominguez and Escalante Canyons in Western Colorado, remote and dramatic tributaries of the Gunnison River, provide a scenic backdrop and favorite destination for people throughout the Southwest. The Colorado Northwest and Southwest Resource Advisory Councils believe the Dominguez and Escalante Canyons deserve special attention by the Bureau of Land Management.

This 238,000-acre area contains outstanding red rock canyons, perennial streams, a large herd of Desert Bighorn Sheep, prehistoric rock art, historic pioneer cabins and settlements, as well as incredible recreational opportunities for mountain biking, hiking, 4-wheeling, boating and many other types of recreation. The Dominguez Canyon Wilderness Study Area enjoys local support for official designation, and the newly commissioned Old Spanish Trail winds its way through the area.

The BLM has a tremendous opportunity to be proactive about this area's future management. Population growth on Colorado's Western Slope has been dramatic, especially in Grand Junction and Montrose, two burgeoning urban centers less than 30 minutes from this spectacular area. Impacts and the public's expectations for BLM's management of this area are sure to increase.

We believe that the BLM's Grand Junction and Uncomphagre Field Offices should undertake a Community Stewardship Plan, engaging the surrounding communities in managing these lands for future generations. Western Colorado RACs have a long history of working with local BLM Field Managers to truly build your 4-C's concept from the ground up, as evidenced by the success of the Colorado Canyons and Gunnison Gorge NCAs. The process we envision would build upon these successes by actively engaging both RACs in the planning process, providing input guidance, and sanctioning this community-based planning effort.

Secretary of the Interior  
Page 2

Madame Secretary, we ask for your support and encouragement to the BLM Director and Colorado State Director to begin this critical planning process for the Dominguez and Escalante Canyons Community Stewardship Plan.

Sincerely,

Geoff Blakeslee  
Chair  
Northwest RAC

Dave Ubell  
Chair  
Southwest RAC

Distribution  
Kathleen Clarke, BLM Director  
Ron Wenker, Colorado State Director



## **Dominquez and Escalante Community Stewardship Plan**

### **Grand Junction BLM**

#### **Uncompahgre BLM**

Opportunity exists for BLM and the community to proactively address several important issues within the Dominquez Canyon WSA, Cactus Park, Escalante Canyon, along the Gunnison River from Delta to Whitewater, and on the newly designated Old Spanish National Historic Trail through the development of a Dominquez and Escalante Community Stewardship Plan. A primary strategy of the Plan will be to integrate management of:

- ***Wilderness***
- ***Multiple Use Recreation***
- ***Historic and Cultural Resources***
- ***Landscape Restoration***

Key issues by area include:

**1.) Dominquez Canyon WSA.** The 75,888 acre Dominquez Canyon WSA has been recommended as suitable for wilderness designation based on its wilderness characteristics, outstanding scenery, spectacular geologic features, ecological diversity, two cascading mountain streams, and archaeological and paleontological resources. Many issues must be addressed prior to wilderness designation including: rehabilitation of intrusions, weed eradication, interpretive opportunities, and manageable boundary determination. (*Grand Junction and Uncompahgre F.O.*)

**2.) Cactus Park.** Cactus Park is receiving increasing use by both motorized and non-motorized users. The existing trails are not sufficient to protect resource values and do not provide adequate recreational trail opportunities. The adjacent Uncompahgre National Forest manages a successful multi-recreation trail system and opportunity exists to link into this existing system. The road to the Cactus Park trailhead, accessing northern Dominquez WSA, is extremely difficult to navigate and contains some sections of road so narrow that passing of vehicles is impossible. The existing parking area at the trailhead is not delineated and is not meeting management goals. Cactus Park has been identified as the next travel management emphasis area by the Grand Junction BLM. (*Grand Junction F.O.*)

**3.) Gunnison River.** Use of the Gunnison River by private and commercial boaters has increased dramatically over the past 10 years. Impacts from this use along the banks include user crowding at specific locations, human waste and litter left on site, creation of fire rings, social trailing, spread of weeds, and trespass on private land adjacent to the river. The recreation experience is affected through encounters with many groups on the river. (*Grand Junction and Uncompahgre F.O.*)

**4.) Old Spanish National Historic Trail.** The Old Spanish Trail was designated as part of the National Trail System in 2002. BLM must identify the trail, various trail segments, obtain local knowledge about the trail, and needed visitor services along the trail for incorporation into the Comprehensive Management Plan which is being developed by the BLM and NPS. (*Grand Junction and Uncompahgre F.O.*)

**5.) Escalante Canyon Special Recreation Management Area (SRMA).** A new Escalante Canyon SRMA is recommended by BLM to provide enhanced recreation management, improved resource protection, and address visitor safety concerns including increasing swimming fatalities and accidents at the popular Potholes Recreation Area. (*Uncompahgre F.O.*)

**6.) Escalante Canyon Area of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC).** The existing 1,895 acre ACEC contains sensitive plant species, natural seeps, and several globally-unique plant associations including beautiful hanging gardens of small-flowered columbine and Eastwood's monkeyflower. Increasing impacts from vehicle camping, OHV use, and hiking is damaging plant habitat areas. Visitor use regulations, user education, and increased monitoring are critical for ACEC management and site protection. (*Uncompahgre F.O.*)

**7.) Dominguez & Escalante Canyons Interpretation, Stabilization, and Protection for Geologic, Historic and Cultural Sites.** The canyons of the Gunnison River and Dominguez and Escalante Creeks provide visitors outstanding opportunities to explore and learn about geologic, archaeological, paleontological, and historical resources set amidst visually stunning red-rock desert scenery. The new Bridgeport Bridge will provide improved non-motorized access to the cascading waterfalls, historic areas, and Native American rock art sites in the Dominguez WSA. A 15 mile County Road, proposed as a BLM Backcountry Byway, offers visitors a trip back to pioneer days through Escalante Canyon's "Red Hole in Time" (popularized by local author Murial Marshall). The Byway provides easy vehicle and viewing access to historic cabins and trails, rock walls with early settler and Native American inscriptions, and spectacular geologic formations. A coordinated interpretation and site protection plan is needed to ensure effective management of these unique sites. (*Grand Junction and Uncompahgre F.O.*)

Benefits-Based Management Surveys and public participation for all areas during plan development will provide critical input for identifying recreation use management zones and actions designed to provide specific recreational activities and experiences, desired physical and social settings, and targeted user benefits.

The BLM proposes to develop a Dominguez and Escalante Community Stewardship Plan to address these issues at a landscape level in conjunction with the community. Proposed timeframes include:

**FY 2005** (10/01/04 – 09/30/05)

- Develop and conduct Benefits Based Management Survey
- Conduct inventories/gather data
- Develop pre-plan
- Develop community advisory group under the sponsorship of the NW and SW RAC's
- Bring Community-Based Partnerships and Ecosystems training course to advisory groups and BLM

**FY 2006-2007** (10/01/05 – 09/30/07)

- Conduct field trips/gather data
- Develop Dominguez and Escalante Community Stewardship Plan
- Develop Environmental Assessment

## **Opportunities for Collaborative Partnerships**

There are great opportunities to involve our partners throughout the planning process and in the management of this area. Partners include:

Northwest and Southwest Resource Advisory Councils (RAC)  
Uncompahgre Plateau Partnership (UP)  
Delta County Historical Society  
Mesa County Historical Society  
Colorado Division of Wildlife  
Riverfront Commission  
Colorado Mountain Club (CMC)  
Colorado Plateau Mountain Bike Association (COPMOBA)  
Old Spanish Trail Association, North Branch Chapter (OSTA)  
Motorcycle Trail Riders Association (MTRA)  
Western Slope ATV Club  
Western Colorado Congress  
Colorado Environmental Coalition  
The Wilderness Society  
Grand Mesa Jeep Club  
U. S. Forest Service  
Mesa, Delta, Montrose Counties  
Colorado Natural Heritage Program (CNHP)  
Colorado Natural Area Program (CNAP)  
State Historic Preservation Office  
U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service

## **National BLM Recreation Priorities Addressed by the Dominguez and Escalante Community Stewardship Plan**

### **GOAL 1 – Improve access to appropriate recreation opportunities**

Plan will address travel management issues such as road inventories and mapping needs, improved public access to the Dominguez WSA and Gunnison River, management of multiple-use trail systems, consistent public access signing and information, and partnerships for trail and road monitoring and maintenance projects.

### **GOAL 2 – Ensure a Quality Experience and Enjoyment of Natural and Cultural Resources**

Benefits-Based Management surveys will be used to assess visitor and community resident preferences for recreation experiences, desired landscape and managerial settings, and quality of life outcomes. Emphasis will be placed on accurate visitor use data gathering, enhanced public safety and visitor services, including increased BLM presence, interpretation, information and education, cultural site protection, and maintenance of recreation sites and facilities.

### **GOAL 3 - Provide for and Receive a Fair Value in Recreation**

This Stewardship Plan will encourage and support collaborative partnerships, volunteers, citizen-centered public service, and sustainable travel and tourism development with the gateway communities of Grand Junction, Delta, and Montrose.